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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0914
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 0376
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0211
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0254
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1797
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 2648
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 4531
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHMFIS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KARACHI 000045

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PGOV PREL PK

SUBJECT: SINDH - IRANIAN AMBASSADOR AND IRANIAN CONSUL
GENERAL TO KARACHI TAKE DIFFERENT TONES

REF: KARACHI 27

Classified By: Classified by Consul General Stephen Fakan for reasons 1
.4 b and d.

¶1. (C) Summary: During a January 31 meeting in Karachi, the Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan, Mashallah Shakari, and the Iranian Consul General to Karachi, Masoud Mohammad Zamani, adopted different tones when discussing Iran's relations with the West. While Shakari appeared to mute his criticism, Zamani used verses by a Pakistani poet to reinforce strong anti-Western rhetoric. They may represent different factions or simply different classes of society, but their approach contrasted enough that Post took note.
End summary.

¶2. (C) During a January 31 seminar on the "30th Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in Iran," held at the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs (PIIA) in Karachi, Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Mashallah Shakari and Iranian Consul General to Karachi Masoud Mohammad Zamani took markedly different approaches when discussing Iranian relations with the West.

Iranian Ambassador Offers Muted Criticism

¶3. (C) After opening in Urdu, Shakari continued in English and appeared to take a more conciliatory line in his comments regarding the West, harshly criticizing Israeli actions in Gaza, but bypassing an opportunity to criticize U.S. support for Israel. He offered only muted criticism of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, opining that "force is not the answer" to the insurgency there. He lauded the success of the "Islamic Revolution" in weaning Iran away from outside influences and told the audience of around 60 that his country wanted a stable Pakistan.

Iranian Consul General Speaks Out

¶4. (C) In contrast, Zamani delivered a harsher condemnation of the West. Speaking entirely in Urdu, which appeared to connect with many in the audience, he quoted verses by Allama Iqbal, Pakistan's national poet, condemning imperialism. The bearded Zamani, who contrasted with the clean shaven Shakari, cautioned that widespread use of English in Pakistan is threatening the Urdu language. He told the crowd that the "blue-eyed, fair skinned ones" have emphasized English to cut

them off from leading poets, whose Persian verse harshly condemned imperialism. When a PIIA employee later attempted to translate the speech into English for the audience, she was shouted down by an irate attendee and then truncated her translation.

Comment

15. (C) The difference in style between the two envoys was pronounced. The event was co-sponsored by the Pak-Iran Friendship Association, so it is likely that both knew they were playing to a sympathetic crowd with license to speak bluntly. Shakari may represent a more moderate faction than Zamani, or he could simply be more refined. Nonetheless, as the Iranians appear to be attempting to heighten their profile in Karachi (reftel), Post considers the contrast significant enough to merit further observation.

FAKAN